

Wii an hour before bedtime. A study in the *Journal of Applied Physiology* suggests that performing tasks in front of a bright display suppresses the production of melatonin, a hormone that helps regulate the sleep-wake cycle; you may spend hours tossing and turning before drifting off, or wake repeatedly throughout the night. For a morning boost, try Garnier Nutritioniste Skin Renew Awakening Face Massager (\$13, at drugstores); this editor fave has a roller-ball applicator that glides on a skin-brightening serum.

SKIN SPOILER
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Gaining and Losing the Same 10 Pounds Over and Over

Weight gain and loss, especially when they're done quickly and repeatedly (hello, crash diets and lemon-water cleanses), weaken the fibers of skin, making it prone to premature sagging, stretch marks and little lines. Even putting on and shedding as few as five pounds in rapid succession can upset the body's hormone levels and trigger breakouts.

Your skin saver: If you've yo-yo dieted and your skin's got sag, a lotion like Origins Youthtopia Skin Firming Lotion with Rho-diola (\$49, origins.com) may help a little. Most important: Set a goal of losing no more than two pounds per week, a safe, skin-friendly amount. "Slow and steady wins the race," says Jeffrey Morrison, M.D., a New

York City doctor who specializes in weight loss and nutrition. Don't go it alone: Consider joining a group that offers support, like WeightWatchers or 3fatchicks.com.

SKIN SPOILER
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Mistaking Rosacea for Acne

It's easy to confuse rosacea's angry red patches, visible blood vessels and inflamed pimples with plain old acne. So easy that 78 percent of the 14 million Americans with the condition don't have the slightest clue they've got it, according to the National Rosacea Society. More women are being diagnosed with it than ever before. Experts chalk up the rise to the wider availability of active ingredients in skin-care products, which may trigger flare-ups, and higher stress levels, which can lower skin's resistance to inflammation and acne.

Your skin saver: If you have any of the above symptoms—or if you have splotches that worsen after workouts, when you eat spicy food or drink alcohol, or when you're under stress—see a dermatologist. She'll probably prescribe Finacea gel, the most common treatment. Doctors also recommend steering clear of products with benzoyl peroxide, glycolic acid and retinol and using ones made to soothe rosacea and tone down redness; try Murad Redness Therapy Correcting Moisturizer SPF 15 (\$37, murad.com).

SKIN SPOILER
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Not Having Enough Fun

If you haven't been spending a lot of time with friends lately, a proven stress buster, consider this: "Studies show that stress weakens the barrier that protects skin from elements like pollution and the sun," Dr. Bank says. That puts you more at risk for breakouts, wrinkles, you name it.

Your skin saver: Spread the fun around; don't stockpile it for weekends. "I schedule one night a week with friends in Outlook like I would do for a work appointment," says New York City dermatologist Amy Wechsler, M.D. "This way it's not optional." Another welcome prescription: sex! "During sex you release beta endorphins, which have acne-healing properties," adds Dr. Wechsler. The big O also increases estrogen, which gives skin glow—a nice perk. ■

Five "Bad" Things That Are Actually Good for Your Skin

Chocolate (yeah!)

Women in a German study who downed a cocoa-rich drink daily—the equivalent of 3.5 ounces of dark chocolate—for 12 weeks experienced less dryness. Their skin also had better blood flow, which pinks your cheeks, and was more resistant to sun damage, thanks to all the antioxidants.



Fruit juice

It gets a bad rap for the sugar, but the antioxidant-packed kind, like cranberry and pomegranate juice, do skin good. So have a small glass or a Pomtini...one!



Oil-rich cleansers

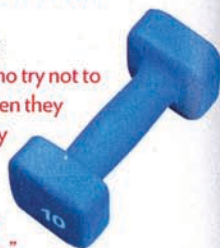
They can help oily skin. "Cleansers that contain emulsifying oils, such as vitamin E or castor oil," explains Dr. Gross, "break down and dissolve dirt and oil without overdrying it, like harsh cleansers can."



Sweat

"I've seen women who try not to work up a sweat when they exercise because they think it will cause breakouts, which means they miss out on the heart benefits,"

says Dr. Dover. But perspiration is great for skin: It opens up pores, releases dirt and generally encourages skin to function properly, so bring it on.



French fries

OK, OK, they're not exactly good for your skin—sorry—but contrary to popular belief, they (and other greasy foods) don't cause pimples. Nice to know!



• YO-YO DIETING doesn't look good on any woman.

